APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/627,614	07/28/2003	Keiichi Takashima	00862.023149	4181

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EXAMINER
BLACKWELL, JAMES H

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2176	

DATE MAILED: 01/24/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE _3_ MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _28 July 2003_.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under _Ex parte Quayle_, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) _1-22_ is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) _1-22_ is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on _28 July 2003_ is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _10/14/03,10/18/05_.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1.   This Office Action is in response to an original application filed 07/28/2003 with a

priority date of **07/30/2002**.

2.   Claims 1-22 are currently pending. Claims 1-6 and 11-16 are independent

claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the
> invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
> Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

4.   Claims 1-7, and 11-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Hitchcock et al. (hereinafter Hitchcock, U.S. Patent No. 6,460,042

filed 11/09/2001).

In regard to independent Claim 1 (and similarly independent Claims 3 and

5), Hitchcock *teaches reading a field data source storing data to be overlaid onto fields*

defined in a form in that user information previously input into a form(s) is stored for

future retrieval in a database (*field data source*) (Abstract).

Hitchcock also teaches *overlaying the data of the field data source onto the fields*

in a form in that subsequent form(s) encountered by the user are automatically pre-

populated with information contained in the database (*field data source*). The user only

needs to input data that is not already stored. The data is initially stored as the user is

filling out a first form(s) (Abstract).

Hitchcock also teaches a *setting means for setting a character string for each of the fields as field attribute information, the character string being composed of characters indicating a format of data to be overlaid in that templates* (Col. 11, lines 45-62 for example) and the forms that they ultimately become (Col. 12, lines 5-29 for example) contain <QUESTION> (template) tags which are replaced by HTML form tags that have among several assigned attributes, character strings describing the format of the data to ultimately be placed in the given form field as a value along with validation rules that describe the format, type, length and other formatting attributes expected (refer to source code snippets referenced above as template and form).

As stated above, Hitchcock teaches the limitation of *overlaying* in that data is initially input to the fields of the form (first time) and stored in the database. When the user again accesses the forms, previously stored values in the database (*field data source*) are *automatically overlaid* into the form fields for which data was previously stored. Since the data was originally input with respect to type, format, and other validation rules embedded into the form, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention that such data would have been correctly overlaid into the form fields since it had to have been input correctly the first time the user accessed the form, providing the benefit of accurate information transfer.

In regard to independent Claim 2 (and similarly independent Claims 4 and 6), Claim 2 (and similarly Claims 4 and 6) reflect the apparatus for processing forms as claimed in Claim 1 (and similarly Claims 3 and 5) and is rejected along the same rationale. Additionally,

Hitchcock teaches *reading means for reading a character string set for each of the fields as field attribute information, the character string being composed of characters indicating a format of data to be overlaid* in that in the process of converting the template to the equivalent HTML form, the forms engine reads the formatting information contained as form attributes in the template and converts them into a form that an HTML browser can understand and use. Subsequent processing is performed on the fields once either the user populates the form for the first time, or the forms engine pre-populates the form with previously stored user data

In regard to dependent Claim 7 (and similarly dependent Claim 17), Hitchcock teaches that *the character string is composed of type specification characters; skip characters, fixed characters or a combination thereof* (Col. 10, lines 48-64; describes a line located in the Application Data File may be "SS_NUM"). Upon encountering the line, the forms engine will look into a data structure that stores the directive interpretation to interpret SS_NUM. SS_NUM may mean, for example, to display a text box with a label that reads "Enter Your Social Security Number" and to put the previously supplied value for social security number (stored in the User Attribute Table) into the text box. SS_NUM may also prescribe a minimum length, maximum length, and call a function that creates the text input box. The Application Data file can optionally supply arguments to directives. Arguments may, for example, instruct the forms engine to apply specific labels or to override default values, *so that the label or format for entering the data can be customized*) (also refer to sample HTML markup

label VALRULE, contains type INT, length Len(9), and whether input is required; Cols. 10-11).

Hitchcock also teaches that *the type specification characters indicating how corresponding data in the data of the field data source to be overlaid onto a field should be interpreted* (again, Cols. 10-11, sample HTML markup, parameter VALRULE Int tells that input is interpreted as an integer).

Hitchcock fails to teach *the skip characters indicating that any corresponding data in the data of the field data source to be overlaid onto a field should be skipped; and the fixed characters indicating that corresponding particular data in the data of the field data source to be overlaid onto a field should be skipped.*

However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to assume that the invention of Hitchcock could have been modified to accommodate such features as an instruction to skip characters as it already provides for other such features, which are interpreted by the forms engine such, for example, the template line (Col. 11, line 51) which instructs that the input should be in the typical form of a social security number as seen in (Col. 12, lines 7-10). The point being that it expects input of a dash between number inputs. The dash in effect acts as a skip character.

In regard to independent Claim 11 (and similarly independent Claims 13 and 15), Claim 11 (and similarly Claims 13 and 15) reflect the form processing apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 (and similarly Claims 3 and 5) and Claim 7, and is rejected along the same rationale.

In regard to independent Claim 12 (and similarly independent Claims 14 and 16), Claim 12 (and similarly Claims 14 and 16) reflect the form processing apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 (and similarly Claims 3 and 5) and Claim 7, and is rejected along the same rationale.

In addition, <u>Hitchcock</u> implies a *recognizing means for recognizing a character indicating that the data length of the data to be overlaid is variable; from the character string* in that the source code snippet (Col. 12, lines 5-29) contains an attribute of MAXLENGTH=2. This implies and allows inputs to be at most of length 2. Hence, this field is variable within the limit defined by this attribute.

<u>Hitchcock</u> also teaches a calculating means for calculating difference between the data length derived from the character string and data length of data of the field data source to be overlaid onto the field, corresponding to the character string (Col. 15, lines 29-40; validation procedure reformats data to obey rules contained in form).

In regard to dependent Claims 18-19, Claims 18-19 contain subject matter that is similar to that found in Claim 7 (and similarly Claim 17), and is rejected along similar lines of reasoning (in particular, refer to rejection rationale for skip characters)

5.   Claims 8-10, and 20-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hitchcock in view of Rawat et al. (hereinafter Rawat, U.S. Patent No. 6,662,340 filed 05/30/2002, issued 12/09/2003).

In regard to dependent Claim 8 (and similarly dependent Claim 20), <u>Hitchcock</u> fails to teach *cutting a character string to be sequentially processed from the*

character string as a picture word. However, <u>Rawat</u> teaches mapping the fields of an electronic form by parsing visual page elements, such as user-visible field labels (Col. 3, lines 47-56).

<u>Rawat</u> uses this information to determine how to automatically populate the fields in a form without requiring prior mapping or examination of the form (compare with the limitation *cutting data of the field data source corresponding to the cut picture word as a field data word*).

<u>Rawat</u> also teaches *determining whether or not the picture word is composed of type specification characters and generating a data table having a pair of the picture word and the field data word when the picture word is determined to be composed of type specification characters; and wherein the overlaying step overlays the data of the field data source onto the fields based on the data table* in that the results are stored in mappings based on several analysis passes of the form and access to dictionaries (see Fig. 4).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to combine the teachings of <u>Hitchcock</u> and <u>Rawat</u> as both inventions relate to form field population. <u>Rawat</u> adds the benefit of extracting data type information from the form without prior analysis.

In regard to dependent Claim 9 (and similarly dependent Claim 21), <u>Hitchcock</u> teaches that *the field attribute information includes data types indicating kinds of data of the field data source to be overlaid* (refer to form code snippets in Cols. 10 and 11).

Hitchcock also teaches *wherein the overlaying step determines whether or not the number of the cut picture words is correct based on the data type, and, if the picture words lack in number, adds the missing picture words and field data words corresponding to the missing picture words, field data words, and then complements the added field data words* (see Cols. 11 and 12, code snippets).

In regard to dependent Claim 10 (and similarly dependent Claim 22), Claim 10 (and similarly Claim 22) contains subject matter that is similar to that found in Claim 1 (and similarly Claims 3 and 5) and is rejected similarly.
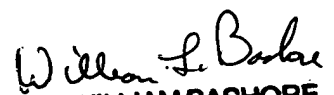
Conclusion

6.   Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James H. Blackwell whose telephone number is 571-272-4089. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri.

7.   If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather R. Herndon can be reached on 571-272-4136. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

8.   Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

James H. Blackwell
01/18/2006

WILLIAM BASHORE
PRIMARY EXAMINER
1/23/2006